

OLC 78-1608/2

Justice

26 April 1978.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: 21 April 1978 Telephone Conversation with Dave Barrett,
Department of Justice, Regarding Attorney General Bell's
Testimony on the need for an FBI Charter

1. On 20 April 1978, I spoke with Dave Barrett with regard to Attorney General Bell's 20 April testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee on the need for an FBI charter. (William Webster, Director of the FBI, and James Adams, Associate Director of the FBI, also testified.) Specifically, I asked Mr. Barrett if the question of overlap with regard to Title V of S. 2525 (intelligence charter legislation) had become an issue. He indicated that the testimony in general restricted itself to the non-intelligence activities of the Bureau. Indeed, Mr. Bell's prepared statement (reviewed and commented on by this office) stresses the need to keep and consider as separate and distinct the topic of charters for the Intelligence Community, including the intelligence components of the FBI, and the topic of charters for the non-intelligence functions of the FBI. Mr. Barrett said that the only reference to the Bureau's intelligence activities was a question to Mr. Webster about the Bureau's counter-intelligence activities. The question itself focused on an ACLU concern with regard to the Bureau's techniques to disrupt or neutralize domestic groups. In Mr. Barrett's opinion, this was the only time throughout the entire testimony that the Bureau's "intelligence" role was mentioned.

2. Mr. Barrett said Mr. Bell surprised everyone by first indicating that he expects to draft a charter outlining the FBI's responsibilities by July 1 and second by stating that in his opinion the Bureau was doing too many background investigations on persons seeking Federal appointment or congressional jobs. Mr. Bell implied that his draft FBI charter would attempt to cut down on the time the Bureau spends doing background investigations. (With regard to this issue, see Memo for the Record dated 20 April 1978.) 25X1

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